

## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 9, 2006. Claims 1 to 36 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 to 11, 20 to 23, 24, 30 to 32, 35 and 36 are withdrawn and Claims 26, 33 and 34 are independent.

Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 12 to 19, 22, 25 to 29, 33 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,815,764 (Tomory). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 26 is directed to an image recording apparatus which can connect with a sheet processing apparatus having plural storage units capable of storing sheets. The apparatus includes reception means for receiving data including image data from a remote data processing apparatus; image recording means for recording an image based on the received image data, on a sheet; and control means for performing control, according as first data instructing to distribute the sheets to the storage unit belonging to which of plural groups of the grouped storage units is included in the data received from the remote data processing apparatus, to distribute the sheets on which the image data from the remote data processing apparatus has been recorded to the storage unit belonging to the group according to the first data. The control means causes said image recording apparatus to execute more than once the recording of the same page of image data of a second-type job and causes to distribute same record result obtained by the recording to plural storage units of the sheet processing apparatus, in a case where the second-type job is accepted by the image recording apparatus from a first-type job in which the first data is not set and the second-type job in which the first data is set.

In contrast, Tomory merely discloses that sheets are discharged to the bin of a designated user. More specifically, Tomory fails to disclose or suggest that "a first-type job that first data of instructing distribution of an output target from a remote data processing apparatus is not set and a second-type job that the first data is set are selectively receivable by an image recording apparatus". Thus, since Tomory does not disclose selectively receiving the first and second type jobs, Tomory cannot possibly disclose or suggest causing "the image recording apparatus to execute more than once the recording of the same page of the image data of the second-type job and causes to distribute the same record result obtained by the recording to plural storage units of the sheet processing apparatus, in case where the second-type job is accepted by the image recording apparatus from the first-type job and the second-type job."

In light of the deficiencies of Tomory as discussed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 26 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended independent Claims 33 and 34 are directed to a method and a computer-readable medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 26. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 33 and 34 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Frank L. Cire  
Attorney for Applicant  
Registration No. 42,419

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, New York 10112-3800  
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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